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ABSTRACT

Despite gains in recent years, women still win political office much less frequently than men do. One reason might be that women may not receive the same response from the media as do their male counterparts. The research study explored this possibility by investigating: (1) differences in the methods used by the mass media to portray male and female U.S. Senate candidates; (2) whether these differences influence peoples' evaluations of candidates; and (3) whether a candidate's gender influences peoples' evaluations of them. Content analysis of 26 senate races, the development of four prototype newspaper articles representing coverage patterns for male and female incumbents and male and female challengers, and a questionnaire were used to determine perceptions of candidates' competence and traits. Findings indicate that people's evaluations of candidates appear to be affected by the sex stereotypes they have about male and female candidates and by the type of coverage candidates receive. Media coverage effects are especially strong for incumbents. Five tables, 26 references, the newspaper articles, and the questionnaire are included. (JHP)

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EVALUATIONS OF MALE AND FEMALE U.S. SENATE CANDIDATES:
AN INVESTIGATION OF MEDIA INFLUENCE

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Evaluations of Male and Female U.S. Senate Candidates: An Investigation of Media Influence

Despite gains in recent years, women still win political office much less frequently than men, especially higher political office (Darcy, Welch, and Clark, 1987). Four principal reasons have been offered to explain why, and each has received some empirical support: (1) women rarely seek political office (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz, 1974; Deber, 1982; Hedlund, Freeman, Hamm and Stern, 1979); (2) women often lack the necessary political resources (Darcy, Welch, and Clark, 1987; Deber, 1982); (3) women often run in hopeless races (Darcy and Schramm, 1977; Darcy, Welch, and Clark, 1987; Deber, 1982); (4) women candidates are victims of sexual stereotyping (Boles and Durio, 1980; Boles and Durio, 1981; Deber, 1982; Ekstrand and Eckert, 1981; Hedlund, Freeman, Hamm and Stein, 1979; Mend, Bell and Bath, 1978; Sapiro, 1982; Sigelman and Welch, 1984).

A fifth potentially important reason has yet to be explored: the mass media may influence the success of female candidates. Even when early obstacles are overcome and female candidates secure their parties' nominations, female candidates may still not receive the same response from the media as do their male counterparts. For a variety of reasons having to do with definitions of news as well as gender stereotyping, reporters and editors may cover male and female candidates differently. If they do, this different treatment can have real consequences for voter information and candidate preference.

The present study explores these possibilities by addressing three questions: First, are there systematic differences in the way the mass media portray male and female U.S. Senate candidates? Second, if there are differences, do they influence people's evaluations of the candidates. Third, in the absence of differential coverage, does the candidate's gender affect people's evaluation and vote choice?

Design

To explore these questions, a content analysis of twenty-six U.S. Senate races from 1982-1986 was conducted to assess potentially important differences in the coverage of male and female candidates.¹ The findings from this content analysis were then used to develop four prototypes of newspaper articles which represent four types of coverage patterns: male incumbent coverage, female incumbent coverage, male challenger coverage, female challenger coverage.² These prototypes were then used in an experiment to investigate the significance of gender differences in news coverage as well as the significance of the candidate's gender for evaluations of senatorial candidates.

Recent research suggests that the gender of the candidate does influence people's evaluations of candidates. For instance, Sapiro's (1982) experimental research suggests that people give different viability ratings to equivalent male and female candidates—that female candidates are rated as less viable than equivalent male candidates. Sapiro's research further suggests that subjects' ratings of a candidate's competence on particular issues are also

influenced by the sex of the candidate. For example, subjects thought female candidates were more competent on education and health issues while male candidates were considered more competent on farm and military issues. Past research also suggests that certain traits are more often associated with females and female officeholders (e.g. honesty, compassion) while other traits are more often associated with males and male officeholders (e.g. leadership, intelligence) (Boles and Durio, 1980; Boles and Durio, 1981; Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson and Rosenkrantz, 1972; Locksley, Borgida, Brekke and Hephum, 1980). Sapiro found that female candidates are seen as better able to maintain honesty and integrity in government.

Development of Prototype Articles

Our content analysis shows that male and female candidates are covered differently in the news. These differences are reflected in the article prototypes developed for use in our experiment.³ Each prototype article focuses on one and only one candidate. In the different experimental conditions we vary both the type of coverage (e.g. male incumbent coverage) and the gender of the candidate. For example, one condition includes a story about a female incumbent candidate who is covered in the news like a typical male incumbent. Various news dimensions and gender differences that were used in the prototype development are described below.

Quantity. First, in terms of the quantity of coverage, the content analysis shows that, on average, twelve paragraphs are published each day about both male and female incumbents. In contrast, an average of eleven paragraphs are published each day for male challengers and an average of eight paragraphs are published for female challengers. These averages determined the length, in paragraphs, of each of the four prototype articles. Second, the content analysis revealed differences in the proportion of paragraphs written about each type of candidate. Specifically, we found that for races involving a male or female incumbent, 53% of the paragraphs published about the race discuss the incumbent. For races involving female challengers, 51% of the paragraphs discuss the challenger and for races with a male challenger, 44% of the paragraphs discuss the challenger. In the prototype articles, 50% of the paragraphs in the male incumbent, female incumbent, and female challenger article are devoted to the candidate while 45% of the paragraphs in the male challenger article discuss the candidate.

Prominence. The content analysis revealed that male incumbents are mentioned in the headline 34% of the time and in the lead sentence 43% of the time. Female incumbents are mentioned in the headline 28% of the time and in the lead 40% of the time. In the male incumbent prototype article, the incumbent is mentioned in the headline and in the lead sentence. In the female incumbent article, the incumbent is mentioned only in the lead sentence.

Male challengers are mentioned in 25% of the headlines and in 31% of the lead sentences. In contrast, female challengers are mentioned in 34% of the headlines and in 40%

of the lead sentences. In the male challenger prototype article, the challenger is not mentioned in the headline or lead sentence. For the female challenger article, the candidate is mentioned in both the headline and lead.

Location of Article. The average page numbers revealed in the content analysis for articles about male and female incumbents and male challengers are 12.3, 11.4, and 12.0 respectively. For female challengers, the average page number for an article is 18.0, indicating less prominent coverage. These differences in the location of the articles are represented in the four prototype articles.

Issues. The content analysis found that for male incumbents, an average of 3.5 paragraphs are written about issues each day while an average of 3.2 issue paragraphs are written for female incumbents and male challengers each day. For female challengers, only 2.5 issue paragraphs are devoted to issues each day. In the prototype articles, three paragraphs are devoted to issues in the male incumbent, female incumbent, and male challenger articles as compared with only two paragraphs in the female challenger article.

The substance of issue discussion was also driven by the content analysis results. The content analysis revealed that "male issues" are discussed most frequently for male incumbents and male and female challengers. At least 70% of the issue discussion was devoted to male issues for these candidates. In contrast, "female issues" are discussed extensively for female incumbents; 72% of the issue coverage was devoted to female issues for female incumbents.⁴ These differences in issue emphasis are represented in the prototype articles. In the male incumbent and challenger articles, the issue paragraphs deal with only male issues. In the female incumbent article, the three issue paragraphs discuss female issues.

Horserace. The content analysis also revealed differences in the amount of horserace coverage for the different types of candidates. Horserace coverage is most frequent for female incumbents. Female challengers also receive a great deal of horserace coverage.⁵ In the prototype articles, three paragraphs discuss the viability of the candidate in the female incumbent article, two paragraphs in the female challenger article, and one paragraph in the male incumbent and male challenger articles.

With regard to the assessments of viability, the content results revealed that male incumbents are most often described as the "likely winner" while female incumbents are often described as "competitive." Male challengers are usually labeled as "competitive" whereas female challengers are usually labeled as "noncompetitive but catching up." In the prototype articles, the candidates are described in these terms.

Criticism. The content analysis revealed that certain types of candidates are more often the subject of criticism than others, and these differences are represented in the prototype articles. In the male and female challenger prototype articles, neither candidate is criticized. In the male incumbent article, the male incumbent is criticized once. In the female incumbent article, the female incumbent is criticized twice.

Resources. The content analysis results showed that the discussion of the candidates'

resources varied by the type of candidate. For instance, the discussion of positive resources (e.g. endorsements, positive strategy, fundraising) is most frequent for female incumbents (26%) and less frequent for male incumbents (15%), male challengers (14%), and female challengers (16%). Similarly, the discussion of negative resources (e.g. lack of endorsements and money, negative strategy) is more frequent for female incumbents (17%) and female challengers (11%) and less frequent for male incumbents (4%) and male challengers (6%). To reflect these differences in the four prototype articles, the female incumbent article includes one mention of a positive resource and one mention of a negative resource. In the female challenger article, one negative resource is mentioned. Positive and negative resources are not mentioned in the male incumbent and male challenger articles.

Background. The content analysis also showed that the candidate's background was discussed most frequently for male incumbents. In the article prototypes, the background of the candidate is mentioned only in the article representing male incumbent coverage.

Traits. With regard to the coverage of traits, the content analysis showed that male incumbents are more likely to be described as insensitive, while female incumbents are more often described as effective. Similarly, male challengers are often described as strong leaders or as dishonest. These particular traits are mentioned in the relevant prototype articles.

Tone. The tone of news coverage is predominantly neutral for all candidates, except female incumbents. Female incumbents receive both more positive and more negative coverage in the races studied, and these differences in tone are represented in the four article types.

Sex of Author. Female authors are more likely to write about female challengers (47%) than male challengers (17%), male incumbents (25%), or female incumbents (14%). Therefore, the author of the female challenger prototype article is a woman, while the other types of articles have male authors. Table 1 presents a summary of the prototype differences described above.

The four prototypes articles are displayed in Appendix A. They were used in an experiment where the sex of the candidate as well as the type of coverage (represented by the four prototype articles) were varied to produce eight experimental conditions. With this design, we explored the influence that "gender" coverage and candidate gender have individually and jointly on candidate evaluation and vote choice.

Subject Recruitment

One hundred-eight students from four spring term political science classes at The University of Michigan participated in the experiment. A more diverse non-student pool of subjects will participate in a second round of experiments planned for Fall 1988, in order to increase the external validity of the experimental results. Fifty-one percent of the student subjects were male and 49% were female. Most of the subjects were social science majors with 45% majoring in political science. Fifty-one percent of the subjects were seniors, 36% juniors, 10% were either freshmen or sophomores and 3% were graduate students.

Experimental Method

The experiment took place during a class period. The experimenter passed out a packet of materials to each subject. On the front page was a "mock up" of a newspaper page. See Appendix B for an example newspaper page. The newspaper page was followed by a questionnaire. Eight different forms of the newspaper page and matching questionnaires were randomly distributed to the subjects. These eight different forms were created by matching each of the four prototype articles with either a fictitious male or a fictitious female candidate. This yielded the following eight experimental conditions.

1. Male Incumbent Senate Candidate (John Parker) with Male Incumbent Coverage
2. Female Incumbent Senate Candidate (Susan Parker) with Male Incumbent Coverage
3. Female Incumbent Senate Candidate (Susan Parker) with Female Incumbent Coverage
4. Male Incumbent Senate Candidate (John Parker) with Female Incumbent Coverage
5. Male Challenger Senate Candidate (Robert Dalton) with Male Challenger Coverage
6. Female Challenger Senate Candidate (Barbara Dalton) with Male Challenger Coverage
7. Female Challenger Senate Candidate (Barbara Dalton) with Female Challenger Coverage
8. Male Challenger Senate Candidate (Robert Dalton) with Female Challenger Coverage

Subjects were told that the newspaper page was taken from a newspaper from another state. The page contained three articles: (1) an article taken from the New York Times about funding for the Star Wars Program, (2) an article taken from USA Today about Michael Dukakis' and George Bush's respective campaign strategies, (3) the prototype article about the U.S. Senate candidate.

Subjects were told to read the newspaper page as they would read any newspaper. Once finished, they were directed to the questionnaire which asked about candidate evaluation, viability and probable vote choice. In addition, questions about candidate issue competence, candidate traits, and respondent demographics were asked.⁶

The questionnaire also contained questions about Star Wars and the presidential candidates. These filler questions were included to reduce demand characteristics by keeping the subjects unsure of the true purpose of the experiment. Another effort to reduce demand characteristics was our description of the study's purpose. At the start of the experiment, subjects were told that the experiment was designed to tell us how the mass media influence people's political attitudes. At the end of the questionnaire, subjects were asked to report what they believed was the purpose of the experiment. The vast majority of the subjects simply reported the cover story. Only two subjects believed the study was concerned with voter sexism and one said that he thought the Senate candidate in the newspaper article was a fictitious candidate.⁷ These results suggest that most subjects did not know the true purpose of the experiment. After the subjects finished the questionnaire, they were debriefed and the experiment was explained.

The experimental approach has advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, generalizing from this experiment to the real political world must be done with caution. The experimental setting is artificial. Subjects read only one article about a completely unknown Senate candidate and then immediately answer numerous questions about that candidate.

This experimental task is not the same as that of a voter who is exposed to a candidate (and the candidate's opponent) in many articles over several months. Moreover, with only these articles to read in a setting which emphasizes careful attention (both the classroom and the cover story), subjects probably attend to the prototypes more than they would to a regular news story about a senate candidate. On the other hand, by controlling for various extraneous variables and manipulating only the sex of the candidate and the type of coverage, this experiment allows us to investigate the effect of candidate gender and news coverage on people's evaluations of candidates under these special circumstances.

Results

Response Rate Differences

It is useful to begin a discussion of results with attention to the frequency of question responses. For the questions pertaining to the Senate candidates, an average of 39% of the questions were answered "don't know." It is possible that students--especially in a classroom setting-- are especially prone to respond "don't know" because students may be more concerned than others about answering questions correctly and therefore more willing to give a "don't know" response when they are uncertain.

Of course a number of these questions ask for judgments about issue positions or candidate traits about which there is no information in the news articles. In such circumstances, a "don't know" response is quite appropriate. One might expect "don't know" responses to be less frequent for questions about traits and issues explicitly mentioned in the candidate articles, but that is not the case. For instance, economic issues were discussed in all coverage conditions except for the female incumbent coverage condition. Yet, response rates were practically equal in all coverage conditions. Specifically, an average of 36% "don't know" responses were given in the male and female incumbent coverage conditions, 35% in the male challenger condition and 39% in the female challenger coverage condition. Similarly, leadership was mentioned in the male challenger coverage condition, yet 54% of the subjects in this condition responded "don't know" to the leadership question. This was significantly greater than the overall "don't know" response rate of 44% for subjects in this coverage condition. Therefore, it appears that differential news attention in this experiment to specific issues and traits does not account for differential response rates and that asking questions about topics not discussed in the news does not account for the high level of "don't know" responses.

Similarly, we might expect that the frequency of "don't know" responses may be smaller for subjects exposed to more information about the candidate. If so, since the incumbent articles are longer than the challenger articles, we would expect fewer "don't know" responses in the incumbent conditions. This is exactly what we find. Forty-four percent of the subjects exposed to challenger coverage gave "don't know" response while only 33% of the subjects exposed to incumbent coverage gave "don't know" responses.⁸ Because the content analysis findings determined the differences in amount of coverage represented in the

incumbent and challenger prototype articles, the response rate results suggest that in the real political environment, people may find it easier to make evaluative judgments about incumbents as compared to challengers.

Similarly, one might expect the frequency of "don't know" responses to be smaller for incumbents than challengers if people use senatorial prototypes when processing information about incumbent senators. Kinder, Peters, Abelson and Fiske (1980) find that presidential prototypes influence evaluation of presidential incumbents but not presidential challengers. The same process may be at work here. Specifically, when subjects read about incumbent senate candidates, subjects may use their senatorial prototype to process information about the candidates. Research on prototypes (Cantor and Mischel, 1979) suggests that prototypes help guide the encoding, retention, and recall of information. The use of senatorial prototypes would therefore aid subjects in their processing of the content of the incumbent senate articles. If subjects are using senatorial prototypes to process incumbent information but not challenger information, then we would expect fewer "don't know" responses for questions about incumbents.

"Don't know" responses also varied by the gender of the candidate. Specifically, an average of 29% of the questions were answered "don't know" for female candidates while almost half the questions (49%) were answered "don't know" for male candidates. Subjects may read the Senate articles about female candidates more carefully if female candidate are viewed as more novel and interesting. If so, respondents would feel more confident in answering questions about the female candidates.

The literature on stereotypes suggest an alternate explanation for the lower "don't know" responses for female candidates. Experimental research has found that stereotypical roles and traits are imputed to a minority member of a group in inverse proportion to the number of other minority members included in the group (Martin and Halverson, 1981; Taylor, Fiske, Etcoff, and Ruderman, 1978). For example, if a Black man is placed in an entirely white work place, research suggests that extreme evaluations and stereotyping of the Black man will occur. This tendency may explain the differences in "don't know" responses for male and female candidates. Most senate candidates are male; female candidates in this predominantly male group may elicit stereotypes. The availability of female stereotypes could facilitate information processing by enabling subjects to go beyond the information given. In other words, in the experimental setting when subjects read about female candidates, subjects may rely on female stereotypes to supply additional information when the information provided is scant or ambiguous. Given this reliance on female stereotypes, the number of "don't know" responses should be smaller for female candidates.

Influence of News Coverage on Candidate Evaluations

The type of coverage a candidate receives may influence peoples' evaluations of the candidates. To explore this possibility, one can investigate how evaluations of candidates of the same gender vary when these candidates are covered differently in the news. For

example, do evaluations of John Parker differ depending on whether he receives male or female incumbent coverage? The data in Table 2a suggest that coverage is consequential. Based on the explicit content differences in the male and female incumbent prototype articles, one would expect John to receive higher viability ratings when he is covered like a male incumbent. This difference in viability assessments is important because voting behavior research has found that viability assessments influence vote choice (Bartels, 1987; Brady and Johnson, 1987). Similarly, since economic issues are mentioned in the male incumbent coverage prototype article and not in the female incumbent article, one would expect John to be viewed as better able to handle economic concerns when he receives male incumbent coverage. As the data in Table 2a make clear, we do find these predicted differences in evaluations.

Other coverage differences do not produce differences in evaluations. First, the U.S.-Soviet Summit is briefly discussed in the male incumbent coverage condition. Thus, one might expect the evaluation of John Parker's competence in handling military issues to be higher when John receives male incumbent coverage as opposed to female incumbent coverage, but this is not the case. With regard to trait evaluations, one would expect male incumbent coverage to lead to more negative ratings for the trait of compassion since in the male incumbent prototype article, the candidate's sensitivity to the needs of working people is questioned. Yet, as the data in Table 2a show, ratings on compassion for John Parker were not affected by differences in coverage.

Finally, we find that John Parker is considered a stronger leader when he receives male incumbent coverage. Although leadership qualities are not explicitly mentioned in either incumbent prototype article, John's experience as a Lieutenant Governor and two-term U.S. Senator is mentioned in the male incumbent coverage condition. This discussion of background may have influenced leadership evaluations.

When one looks at evaluations of Susan Parker in Table 2b, it is once again clear that coverage matters. In terms of predicted content differences, Susan is viewed as more viable when she receives male incumbent coverage. Although content differences would suggest otherwise, Susan's competence ratings for economic and military issues are not significantly higher when she receives male incumbent coverage. Similarly, ratings on compassion were not affected by differences in coverage.

Besides explicit content differences, there appear to be subtle coverage differences that also influence evaluations. First, Susan is viewed as better able to deal with farm issues when she is given male incumbent coverage. Farm issues are never discussed in the incumbent coverage articles, but when Susan receives male incumbent coverage the new rural location of her campaign headquarters is discussed. This mention of the setting for her headquarters may lead subjects to believe that Susan is "a friend of the farmer" and concerned with farm issues. Conversely, Susan is viewed as better able to deal with health issues when she is covered like a female incumbent. Although health issues are not explicitly mentioned, when

Susan is covered like a female incumbent the issues of child abuse and drug issues are discussed. These issues may imply that the candidate is concerned about general health issues.

Finally, with regard to trait evaluations, Susan is seen as more knowledgeable when she receives male incumbent coverage. This may be because Susan's background as a Lieutenant Governor and two-term U.S. Senator is mentioned in the male incumbent coverage condition, and this discussion of background may suggest that Susan is knowledgeable. Finally, one trait difference that cannot be readily attributed to content differences (and therefore is not shown in Table 2a) is honesty. Honesty is not discussed in either incumbent article, yet Susan is seen as more honest when she receives male incumbent coverage.

These data show that content differences lead to certain evaluative differences for male incumbents and other evaluative differences for female incumbents. It may be that the content of the articles although identical, is not perceived the same way for candidates of different gender. This could result from different stereotypes and expectations held by subjects for male and female incumbents. According to research on stereotypes, if subjects encounter stereotype-inconsistent information, they will pay more attention to it and it will then become influential (Fiske and Linville, 1980). For example, subjects may believe that male incumbents are more knowledgeable about certain issues (e.g. the economy, farm issues) and female incumbents are more knowledgeable about other issues (e.g. health issues). If these stereotypes are challenged by information in the candidate articles, subjects may revise their stereotypes by altering their issue ratings. Thus, the articles may become more influential if they challenge prevailing stereotypes.

Similarly, certain trait-content effects are found for male incumbents (e.g. leadership) while other trait-content effects (e.g. knowledge) are found for female incumbents. This difference may also be explained in terms of differences in perceptions of male and female incumbents. It may be that subjects use different standards in evaluating male and female incumbents; subjects may expect more from male incumbents. When John and Susan Parker receive female incumbent coverage, John is given a lower leadership rating (3.50 v. 3.20). Subjects appear to expect more from the male incumbent and their expectations are not fulfilled when John is covered like a female incumbent. Similarly, when John and Susan both receive male incumbent coverage, Susan is given higher knowledge ratings than John (2.29 v. 2.50). This could also be explained by differences in expectations. If subjects assume that male incumbents have a higher level of information than female incumbents, when female incumbents appear knowledgeable, subjects may revise their evaluations substantially.

When one looks at challenger coverage, one finds fewer significant differences for candidates covered like male challengers and candidates covered like female challengers. This could result from subjects relying on senatorial prototypes to process information about

incumbents but not about challengers. This reliance on prototypes would ease the encoding and retention of information in the incumbents' articles thus making it more influential than the information about the challengers. Coverage effects may also be smaller for challengers because the challenger prototype articles are shorter, reflecting real differences found in the content analysis.

The data in Table 2c and Table 2d show that male challenger coverage leads to more positive viability assessments for both male and female candidates. This again reflects coverage differences. One might expect candidates to receive higher leadership ratings and lower honesty ratings when they receive male challenger coverage. Because the male challenger prototype article (1) questions the candidate's honesty and (2) stresses the candidate's leadership ability. As the data in Table 2c and Table 2d suggest, however, leadership and honesty ratings are not affected by differences in coverage.

There could be different coverage effects for different types of respondent as well. For example, people with higher levels of education may be less susceptible to coverage effects (Iyengar, Kinder and Peters, 1982). This possibility cannot be addressed here because of the homogeneous nature of this student sample.

Influence of Candidate Gender

Based upon recent research on gender stereotyping of political candidates (Boles and Durio, 1980; Boles and Durio, 1981; Ekstrand and Eckert, 1981; Mend, Bell, and Bath, 1976; Sapiro, 1982), one might expect subjects to respond differently to otherwise-identical candidates of different gender. To explore these differences, one can first compare subjects' evaluations of John Parker when he receives male incumbent coverage to evaluations of Susan Parker when she receives male incumbent coverage. The data in Table 3a indicate that subjects' evaluations of a incumbent's ability to handle the economy is influenced by the candidate's gender. Specifically, subjects exposed to male incumbent-type coverage believe John Parker is better able to handle economic issues when compared to Susan Parker even in the face of identical news information. On the other hand, subjects believe Susan Parker is better able to deal with women's rights. Finally, subjects said the term "honest" described Susan better than John. These results are striking if one keeps in mind that the two candidates' coverage is exactly the same except one candidate is a woman and the other is a man.

When one compares identical male and female candidates in other coverage conditions, one finds other evaluation differences. For instance, when the candidates receive female incumbent coverage (Table 3b), Susan Parker is viewed as more compassionate and somewhat more honest than John Parker. In the female challenger coverage condition (Table 3d), subjects viewed Barbara Dalton as better able to handle health and women's issues but less aptly described as a strong leader as compared to Robert Dalton. In the male challenger coverage condition (Table 3c), subjects once again thought Barbara Dalton could handle women's issues better than Robert Dalton.

These differences in candidate evaluations correspond to stereotypes people hold

about male and female candidates. For instance, gender stereotype research has demonstrated that people think women are more compassionate and honest than men, while men are viewed as stronger leaders (Boles and Durio, 1980; Boles and Durio, 1981; Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson and Rosenkrantz, 1972; Locksley, Borgida, Brekke and Hephurn, 1980). Subjects in this study seem to hold these same stereotypical beliefs about candidate traits.

Issues, like traits, can be described as either male or female (Kahn and Goldenberg, 1988, Sapiro, 1983). For instance, Sapiro finds that people believe women are more competent on certain issues (e.g. education and health issues) while men are more competent on others (e.g. military and farm issues). The experimental results suggest that in certain circumstances, issue evaluations of male and female candidates do differ. For instance, when both John and Susan Parker receive male incumbent coverage (Table 3a), John is seen as better able to handle the economy, a stereotypically male issue. Conversely, when Robert and Barbara Dalton receive female challenger coverage (Table 3d), Barbara is seen as better able to handle the female issue of health care. In three of the four coverage conditions, the female candidate is seen as better able to handle women's issues when compared to the male candidate. The only exception is the female incumbent-type coverage which is the one condition that mentions only "female issues" (drugs and child abuse).

These findings suggest that subjects' evaluations of male and female candidates may be influenced by the subjects' gender stereotypes. Other differences in evaluations of male and female candidates that one may have expected to find given past research on gender stereotypes were not found here. For instance, male candidates were not seen as better able to deal with military and farm issues and female candidates were not seen as better able to maintain honesty and integrity in government. Female candidates also were not viewed as better able to deal with educational issues. Finally, subjects did not rate male candidates as more knowledgeable than equivalent female candidates.

Of the issues and traits examined in this study, the findings suggest that male and female candidates are more often differentiated by female stereotypical traits and issues (honesty, compassion, women's rights, and health issues) than by male stereotypical traits and issues (leadership and the economy). Why this is so is not clear. To make sense of this pattern, it is useful to look at female and male subjects separately. While there are no systematic differences in coverage effects for male and female respondents, there are differences in candidate gender effects.

In order to investigate the relationship between subjects' gender and their evaluations of male and female candidates, we must look at evaluations of male and female candidates overall--collapsing the different coverage types. This is necessary because of the small sample sizes within each coverage type. The experimental data suggest that female more than male subjects tend to differentiate between male and female candidates. Female subjects think female candidates are more compassionate ($T=3.21$, $p<.01$) and more honest

($T=2.72$, $p<.05$) than male candidates. Female subjects also think that female candidates are better able to maintain honesty and integrity in government ($T=2.36$, $p<.05$) and that women candidates are better able to handle health ($T=2.61$, $p<.05$) and women's issues ($T=2.49$, $p<.05$). Male subjects differentiate between male and female candidates on only one issue: male subjects think that women candidates are better able to handle women's issues ($T=3.98$, $p<.01$).

Why should female subjects be more willing to use female stereotypes when evaluating male and female candidates? It may be that gender is more salient for the female subjects in our study. Specifically, female students on a liberal college campus may be more sensitive than male students to feminism and other women's issues. Therefore, gender issues may be more salient for female students who may therefore be more likely to think in gender-specific terms and process information by gender (Bem, 1981; Markus, Crane, Bernstein, and Saldi, 1982). If gender is more salient for female students for these reasons, we would expect female subjects to have especially positive feelings for the Women's Movement. This is exactly what we find. Female subjects give the Women's Movement a thermometer rating of 65.5 while males give the Women's Movement a rating of 54.3. This thermometer rating for the female subjects is much higher than the national average. Poole and Zeigler (1985) report that women, nationally, give the Women's Movement a rating of 55.2. The women in our sample are probably not representative of women outside the college environment. Therefore, it may be the case that with a more representative sample—with subjects who are less sensitive to gender issues—the evidence for female stereotyping of male and female candidates will be less pronounced.

The Influence of Candidate Gender and Candidate Coverage

Finally, one can investigate the combined effect of candidate gender and candidate coverage on evaluations of candidates. For instance, how do evaluations of male incumbents who are covered like male incumbents differ from evaluations of female incumbents who are covered like female incumbents? Or, to put it another way, given the current differences in coverage for male and female incumbents, will people evaluate male and female incumbents differently? The data in Table 4a provide a clear answer. Subjects evaluate male and female incumbents differently on several dimensions. First, the content differences we found in Table 2 are clearly evident here. Specifically, the male incumbent is viewed as significantly more viable than the female incumbent, as better able to handle military, farm, and economic issues, and as a stronger leader. The female incumbent is viewed as better able to handle women's issues, even though this issue was not mentioned in the incumbent articles. Overall, these results suggest that content effects overwhelm gender effects: there is only one clear gender effect evident in Table 4a (women's issues) but five coverage effects. Other gender effects which were found earlier—women being viewed as more compassionate and honest—disappear here. These results suggest that coverage effects are more influential than gender effects and that in the current media environment, media differences lead to more negative evaluations of female as compared to male incumbents.

When one compares evaluations of male challengers who are given male challenger coverage to evaluations of female challengers who are covered like female challengers (Table 4b), one finds that both content differences and gender differences influence evaluations. For instance, as the content would suggest, male challengers are advantaged in terms of viability and leadership assessments. Content differences also help explain why subjects believe female challengers are better able to maintain honesty and integrity in government. Yet, other differences emerge that cannot be considered content effects. Female challengers are viewed as better able to handle women and educational issues and they are viewed as more compassionate than male challengers. These findings reflect differences in the candidates' gender that may result from gender stereotyping.

Male challengers do not enjoy the same evaluation advantage over female challengers as do male incumbents over female incumbents. Some coverage differences lead to relatively positive evaluations of the male challenger (e.g. viability and leadership), while others lead to more negative evaluations (e.g. honesty and integrity in government). Gender effects studied here consistently lead to more positive evaluations of the female challengers (e.g. education, women, and compassion).

Influence of Candidate Status

Candidate evaluation may also be influenced by the status of the candidate. For example, news coverage may be more influential for incumbents than challengers. As the data in Table 4 suggest, coverage effects seem to be more powerful for incumbents than challengers. Specifically, there are five coverage effects found for incumbent candidates (viability, economy, military, farming, and leadership) while only three coverage effects were found for challengers (viability, honesty and integrity in government, and leadership). Coverage effects may be greater for incumbents simply because the incumbent prototype articles are longer, reflecting real differences found in the content analysis. Or it may be that subjects rely on senatorial prototypes when reading the incumbent articles making information about the incumbents easier to digest and therefore more influential. In either case, the media's impact on candidate evaluations in the real political environment may be greater for incumbents than for challengers. This is bad news for female incumbents since their coverage seems to produce less favorable evaluations.

Similarly, by comparing evaluations of challengers to incumbents, one can investigate the influence of status on evaluation. Differences in evaluations may be a reflection of differences in coverage patterns for challengers and incumbents. Or, holding coverage constant, differences in evaluation may be a reflection of the effect of status on candidate evaluation. In this experimental design, one cannot distinguish coverage effects from status effects, but one can see whether incumbents given incumbent coverage are evaluated differently from challengers who are given challenger coverage.

As the data in Table 5 demonstrate, incumbents are evaluated more positively than challengers. Some of these differences can be attributed to differences in the content of the

different newspaper articles. The discussion of viability differed in the four prototype articles: male incumbents are described as "likely winners"; female incumbents and male challengers as "competitive"; and female challengers as "noncompetitive but catching up." Thus, the higher viability ratings given to incumbents can be explained in terms of differences in content. Incumbents are also seen as better able to maintain honesty and integrity in government and more honest than challengers and this too may reflect content differences. In the male challenger prototype article, the candidate's honesty is questioned.

Other differences that emerge cannot be attributed to news content. Incumbents are seen as more compassionate than challengers. Yet, in the male incumbent prototype article the following quote appears: "...his principal opponent in this year's Senate race has said that Parker is insensitive to the needs of working people." No such criticism appeared in the male challenger articles. Similarly, incumbents are viewed as more competent in dealing with particular issues such as health, and, to a lesser extent, education. Yet, neither of these issues is explicitly mentioned in any of the prototype articles.

These results suggest that incumbents have an advantage over challengers in terms of subjects' evaluations. This advantage seems to be both a function of the candidates' status and of different coverage patterns for incumbents and challengers. Congressional researchers relying on survey evidence have also found evidence for an incumbency advantage. Specifically, these researchers have found that voters tend to evaluate real-life incumbents more positively than their challengers, particularly in situations where there is little specific information about the candidate (Hinckley, Hofstetter and Kessel, 1974; Mann and Wolfinger, 1980)

Conclusions

Subjects' evaluations of candidates appear to be driven by both the sex stereotypes subjects hold about male and female candidates and by the type of coverage the candidates receive. Coverage effects are especially strong for incumbents. Male incumbent coverage produces much more positive candidate evaluations as compared to female incumbent coverage. Differences in coverage for male and female challengers produce less significant differences in candidate evaluations. Yet, candidates covered like male challengers are considered more viable than candidates who receive female challenger coverage.

Gender stereotypes lead to more positive evaluations of female candidates for particular traits and issues (e.g. honesty, compassion, women, health and educational issues) and more negative evaluations for others (e.g. leadership and economic issues). Female sex stereotyping seems to be more common (e.g. stereotyping for female traits and issues) and female subjects seem to be more willing to use female stereotypes when they evaluate candidates.

With regard to gender differences, the experimental results suggest that female

candidates will be less successful in securing seats in the U.S. Senate when male issues and traits top the public's agenda. Specifically, if these male traits and issues are primed in the public's mind, then people will evaluate candidates on these issue and trait dimensions (Iyengar, Peters and Kinder, 1982). According to our experimental results, male candidates will be evaluated more positively on male dimensions and therefore female candidates will be disadvantaged. The content analysis results suggest that current media coverage differences also make election to the U.S. Senate more difficult for female candidates, especially female incumbents.

Finally, results from the experiment suggest that incumbents are evaluated more positively than challengers. This incumbency advantage seems to be a function of different coverage patterns for incumbents and challengers, but news coverage differences account for only part of the incumbency advantage.

The results of this study are suggestive but because of its experimental nature, one must use caution in generalizing from this study to the real political world. The experimental setting is artificial for several reasons. First, the subjects receive much less information about the Senate candidate than they would in the real political environment. Subjects receive only one article about a candidate and no information about the candidate's party or about the opponent.

Second, the experimental setting artificially heightens the attention paid to the newspaper articles. Although subjects were encouraged to "read the articles as they would read any newspaper," most read and did not merely skim the articles. Third, evaluations are given immediately after reading the articles--there is no time here for memory decay. Fourth, the experimental setting--a classroom--may have elicited evaluative apprehension. Subjects may have been especially cautious in answering questions about the candidates. Fifth, the use of college student as subjects limits the generalizability of our findings. For example, the women subjects in our sample may rely on positive female stereotypes more than other women who have less positive feelings for the women's movement. Similarly, both male and female student subjects may be more liberal in their attitudes than the general population towards women candidates. Therefore, we cannot assume that the results reported here will be found when non-students participate in this study. To check for this possibility, a more diverse non-student pool of subjects will participate in a second round of experiments.

Despite these shortcomings, by controlling for various extraneous variables and manipulating only the sex of the candidate and the type of coverage, this experiment permits study of the effects of these two variables on evaluations of candidates. The experimental method permits careful control of extraneous variables (e.g. experience, background) that would inevitably be active in a survey study. Just as the combination of content analysis and experimental work reported here improves on efforts which rely on only one method, studies of media and gender effects will benefit from the accumulation of both experimental and survey results.

Table 1. Summary of Prototype Differences

<u>Prototype Characteristic</u>	<u>Male Incumbent</u>	<u>Female Incumbent</u>
Length of Article	12 paragraphs	12 paragraphs
Proportion of Paragraphs About Candidate	50%	50%
Prominence	Headline and Lead Mention	Lead Mention
Location	Page 12	Page 11
Issues	3 Paragraphs	3 Paragraphs
Content of Issues	"Male" Issues	"Female" Issues
Horse race Coverage	1 Paragraph	3 Paragraphs
Horse race Assessment	"Surewinner"	"Competitive"
Criticism	1 Criticism	2 Criticisms
Positive and Negative Resources	No Mention	Mention of Positive and Negative Resources
Background	Mention	No Mention
Traits	"Insensitive"	"Effective"
Tone	Neutral	Mixture (Positive and Negative Tone)
Sex of Author	Male	Male

<u>Prototype Characteristic</u>	<u>Male Challenger</u>	<u>Female Challenger</u>
Length of Article	11 paragraphs	8 paragraphs
Proportion of Paragraphs About Candidate	45%	50%
Prominence	No Headline or Lead Mention	Headline and Lead Mention
Location	Page 12	Page 18
Issues	3 Paragraphs	2 Paragraphs
Content of Issues	"Male" Issues	"Male" Issues
Horse race Coverage	1 Paragraph	2 Paragraphs
Horse race Assessment	"Competitive"	"Noncompetitive But Catching Up"
Criticism	No Mention	No Mention
Positive and Negative Resources	No Mention	Mention of Negative Resource
Background	No Mention	No Mention
Traits	"Strong Leader", "Dishonest"	No Trait Mentions
Tone	Neutral	Neutral
Sex of Author	Male	Female

Table 2. Candidate Evaluation by Experimental Condition:
The Influence of Candidate Coverage

A.	<u>Question</u> ¹	<u>Male Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u> ²	<u>Female Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u> ³	<u>DE</u>
	Viability***	1.33	2.45	-3.23	18
	Economy**	2.86	4.60	-3.32	14
	Military	3.57	4.40	-1.24	10
	Leadership***	2.43	3.50	-3.56	11
	Compassion	2.14	2.60	-1.33	8
B.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Male Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Female Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Viability***	1.30	2.36	-3.61	19
	Economy	3.89	4.47	-1.06	22
	Military	4.11	5.07	-1.73	22
	Farming**	3.40	4.93	-2.51	23
	Health*	3.43	2.69	2.07	21
	Knowledge*	2.29	2.93	-1.97	20
	Compassion	1.86	1.87	-0.08	21
C.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Male Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Female Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Viability***	2.14	3.11	-3.71	14
	Honesty and Integrity	4.67	3.57	2.05	14
	Leadership	2.00	2.50	1.50	6
	Honest	3.40	2.50	1.24	7
D.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Male Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Female Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Viability*	2.50	3.27	-2.40	17
	Honesty and Integrity	3.75	3.14	0.86	13
	Leadership	2.75	3.33	-1.43	12
	Honest	2.83	2.40	0.76	9

¹See Appendix C for exact question wordings.

²The smaller the number, the more positive the evaluation.

³One-tailed p-values are presented for traits and issues explicitly mentioned in the prototype articles (viability for all conditions, economy, military and compassion for incumbent conditions, and honesty and integrity in government, leadership and honesty for challenger conditions). Two-tailed p-values are presented for all other traits and issues.

Note: Traits and issues are included in the table if (1) they are explicitly mentioned in the article or (2) if the differences in traits or issues achieve statistical significance.

* p<.10

** p<.05

*** p<.01

Table 3. Candidate Evaluation by Experimental Condition:
The Influence of Candidate Gender

A.	<u>Question</u> ¹	<u>Male Incumbent Coverage</u> ² <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Male Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u> ³	<u>DE</u>
	Economy**	2.86	3.89	-2.23	14
	Women***	4.40	2.44	3.09	12
	Honest**	2.33	1.60	2.28	9
B.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Female Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Female Incumbent Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Compassion**	1.87	2.60	-2.77	24
	Honest*	2.31	2.83	-1.85	17
C.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Male Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Male Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Women*	4.00	2.78	1.92	12
D.	<u>Question</u>	<u>Female Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Female Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>Female Challenger Coverage</u> <u>with Male Candidate (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u>	<u>DE</u>
	Leadership***	3.33	2.50	2.39	8
	Health*	3.33	4.17	-1.84	10
	Women***	2.89	4.33	-4.81	13

¹See Appendix C for exact question wordings.

²The smaller the number, the more positive the evaluation.

³Two-tailed p-values are presented for all traits and issues.

Note: Traits and issues are included in this table if they achieved statistical significance.

* p<.10

** p<.05

*** p<.01

Table 4. The Influence of Candidate Gender and Candidate Coverage on Candidate Evaluation

A.	Question ¹	Male Incumbent Coverage ² with Male Candidate (Mean)	Female Incumbent Coverage with Female Candidate (Mean)	T Value ³	DF
	<u>Different News Content</u>				
	Viability***	1.33	2.36	-3.80	18
	Economy**	2.86	4.47	-2.84	20
	Farming**	3.25	4.93	-2.64	21
	Military**	3.57	5.07	-2.83	20
	Leadership**	2.43	3.20	-2.65	20
	Compassion	2.14	1.87	1.26	21
	<u>Identical News Content</u>				
	Women*	4.40	3.23	1.76	16
B.	Question	Male Challenger Coverage with Male Candidate (Mean)	Female Challenger Coverage with Female Candidate (Mean)	T Value	DF
	<u>Different News Content</u>				
	Viability***	2.14	3.27	-3.52	16
	Honesty and Integrity**	4.67	3.14	2.93	14
	Leadership***	2.00	3.33	-6.17	8
	Honest	3.40	2.40	1.77	8
	<u>Identical News Content</u>				
	Education**	4.20	3.00	2.28	9
	Women**	4.00	2.89	2.31	12
	Compassion**	3.00	2.00	2.42	7

¹See Appendix C for exact question wordings.

²The smaller the number, the more positive the evaluation.

³One-tailed p-values are presented for traits and issues explicitly mentioned in the prototype articles (viability for all conditions, economy, military and compassion for incumbent conditions, and honesty and integrity in government leadership and honesty for challenger conditions). Two-tailed p-values are presented for all other traits and issues.

Note: Traits and issues are included in the table if (1) they are explicitly mentioned in the article or (2) if the differences in traits or issues achieve statistical significance.

* p<.10

** p<.05

*** p<.01

Table 5 Candidate Evaluation by Candidate Status

<u>Question</u> ¹	<u>Incumbent (Mean)</u> ²	<u>Challenger (Mean)</u>	<u>T Value</u> ³	<u>DF</u>
Viability***	1.90	2.83	-4.87	74
Vote*	2.72	3.09	-1.93	67
Health***	2.89	3.80	-3.78	58
Education*	3.19	3.65	-1.82	60
Honesty and Integrity*	3.28	3.84	-1.81	65
Compassion**	2.10	2.53	-2.44	57
Honest**	2.30	2.80	-2.14	48

¹See Appendix C for exact question wordings.

²The smaller the number, the more positive the evaluation

³Two-tailed p-values are presented for all traits and issues.

Note: Traits, issues, and other variables are included in this table if they achieved statistical significance.

* p<.10

** p<.05

*** p<.01

Endnotes

- 1 For a more detailed discussion of the design of the content analysis, see Kahn and Goldenberg (1988).
- 2 Prototype articles representing male and female candidates in open races were not developed because the content analysis revealed few significant differences in the coverage patterns for these types of candidates.
- 3 In developing the prototype articles, we did not merely average the coverage differences found in the content analysis. By relying solely on averages, we would neglect many larger gender differences in coverage that do occur. Moreover, since the experiment uses only one prototype article, the effects are muted as compared with the real world where people are typically exposed to many articles about their senate candidates (an average of 136 articles in the races we studied over a nine week period.) An example will illustrate the approach. The content analysis revealed that female incumbents were criticized in 37% of the articles while male incumbents were criticized only 25% of the time. Male and female challengers were criticized with equal frequency, an average of 20% and 19% of the time, respectively. In developing the prototype articles, neither candidate is criticized in the male and female challenger prototype articles. In the male incumbent article, the candidate is criticized once and in the female incumbent article, the candidate is criticized twice.
- 4 Male issues include foreign policy, economics, farming, and fair share for the state. Female issues include minority rights, environment, abortion, school prayer, drugs, and discussions of social programs. This distinction is partly driven by Sapiro's (1982) finding that male candidates are considered more competent on farming and military issues while female candidates are considered more competent on health and education issues.
- 5 Horserace coverage was measured by (1) the number of paragraphs written about the horserace and (2) the number of viability assessments made for each candidate.
- 6 See Appendix C for the exact question wordings for the following questions: vote choice, viability, issue competence, and trait questions.
- 7 These subjects were not excluded from the study. Exclusion of these subjects would not have altered the experimental results.
- 8 While this difference is not statistically significant, it is substantively important.

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APPENDIX A

MALE INCUMBENT PROTOTYPE ARTICLE (WITH MALE CANDIDATE'S NAME)

Senator Parker Opens New Campaign Office

By John MacIntyre

(Page 12)

U.S. Sen. John Parker announced Monday that he will locate his campaign headquarters in Phelps County. Rural Phelps County, where trees outnumber people, is a long way from Washington or the social atmosphere of the state's wealthier centers. Senator Parker said that he prefers it that way.

After officially opening his new headquarters, Parker strolled through the streets of Carlisle, a nearby town, with his suit coat thrown over his shoulder. He stopped by Joe's Tavern for a cool drink and talked to some of the patrons.

In a speech delivered in Carlisle, Parker, the two term senator and former lieutenant governor, stressed the importance of economic issues in the upcoming election. He explained that although the economy is strong nationally, economic prosperity has not been as great statewide.

Although his principal opponent in this year's Senate race has said that Parker is insensitive to the needs of working people, Parker said Monday that he "... will not rest until the people of this state are enjoying the economic prosperity that our friends in neighboring states have been enjoying." He said that further trade measures need to be implemented to help improve the economic situation here.

Besides stressing the need for tougher trade measures, Senator Parker also said that defense issues will play a critical role in the November elections. He said that he was encouraged by the progress made during the recent US-Soviet summit meetings. He hoped that summit meetings between the two Superpowers would be continued by the next president.

Senator Parker does not face any tough competition in his bid for reelection. Polls show that he is far ahead of his principal opponents and Senator Parker says that he is confident that he will be reelected.

In other political news, the three major television networks renewed their support for a national uniform poll closing time on Thursday and promised in the meantime not to project a winner in any state in November's presidential election before polls closed in that state.

Representatives of ABC, CBS, and NBC told the Senate Rules Committee that they will make permanent their commitment to avoid early calling of state races if legislation is approved to have all polls in the continental United States close at 9 p.m. EST.

Steven Hessler, of the Brookings Institute, a strong supporter of the Senate legislation, attended the meeting. Thomas Ross, senior vice president for news at NBC, George Watson, vice president and Washington bureau chief of Capital Cities-ABC News, and Warren Mitofsky, vice president, election and survey unit, CBS News all expressed their commitment to the Senate legislation.

Hessler said that the networks had made the commitment previously, but that NBC had violated it during the New York Democratic presidential primary.

"I can assure you that was an inadvertant aberration and it will not occur again," NBC's Ross responded.

In 1984, Hessler said, all three networks had declared President Reagan's re-election by 5:30 PST.

FEMALE INCUMBENT PROTOTYPE ARTICLE
(WITH MALE CANDIDATE'S NAME)

Senate Race May Turn Into Real Horserace

By John MacIntyre

(Page 11)

Although recent polls show that this year's Senate race will be a real horserace, U.S. Sen. John Parker is confident that he will be victorious in his reelection bid. At a press conference Monday, Parker said that he anticipates tough competition, but he said he believes that voters will send him back to the Senate.

Parker said that he has been an effective senator and that he has been successful in making changes in the Senate's legislative agenda. He cited the Child Abuse Reform Act as legislation that he has cosponsored. Parker said that "this legislation will be instrumental in securing funds to help detect potential victims of child abuse."

As well as cosponsoring the Child Abuse Reform Act, Sen. Parker said that he has been concerned about the drug problem for many years--long before it became a popular issue. He said, "Drug abuse is an important issue that transcends any particular election campaign."

Candidates should not offer "band-aids" to superficially fix the drug problem, Parker said. He said he hoped that intellectual and hard-hitting solutions would be offered and debated. His principal opponent in the Senate race has said that Parker has failed to present any proposals of his own. Other critics agree by saying that Parker likes to talk about the problem of drugs, but has yet to offer any legislation to deal with the problem.

Parker faces a tough reelection campaign. Although he has secured the endorsement of several consumer and environmental groups, polls show that this year's Senate race will be close. Parker is running far behind his chief opponent in terms of campaign fundraising.

Polls show that Parker's support is strongest in the urban areas of the state. He needs to win these areas by large margins in order to counter his weak support in the outstate area.

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Hessler said that the networks had made the commitment previously, but that NBC had violated it during the New York Democratic presidential primary.

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In 1984, Hessler said, all three networks had declared President Reagan's re-election by 5:30 PST.

MALE CHALLENGER PROTOTYPE ARTICLE
(WITH MALE CANDIDATE'S NAME)

Pols Predict Many Close Contests This Fall

By John MacIntyre

(Page 12)

Political experts through out the state are anticipating plenty of tight races this campaign season. Besides a close presidential race, this state's U.S. Senate contest is likely to be very competitive.

In the Senate race here, Robert Dalton is trying to unseat Sen. Parker. Dalton is mounting a strong challenge according to recent polls, and the race is viewed as too close to call. Polls show that Ford's support is greatest in the urban areas of the state and that he is gaining strength in the state's farming communities.

While some critics question his honesty, Dalton has stressed his leadership ability. If elected to the Senate, he said he would emerge as a strong leader for the state.

Dalton has stressed the importance of the economy in the upcoming election. At a speech at the Rotary International Club luncheon Monday, Dalton said that although the economy is strong nationally, economic prosperity has not been as great here at home.

"I'm going to go to Washington and make things happen for the people of this state," Dalton told 125 people at the luncheon. "I will see to it that the people of this state take part in the nation's economic recovery."

Dalton also stressed the importance of tougher trade measures that would improve the economic situation here. He also said that defense issues would play a critical role in the November elections. Dalton said that he was encouraged by the progress made during the recent U.S.-Soviet summit meetings and he hoped that summit meetings between the two Superpowers would be continued by the next president.

In other political news, the three major television networks renewed their support for a national uniform poll-closing time on Thursday and promised in the meantime not to project a winner in any state in November's presidential election before polls closed in that state.

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FEMALE CHALLENGER PROTOTYPE ARTICLE
(WITH MALE CANDIDATE'S NAME)

U.S. Senate Candidate Robert Dalton Stresses Pocketbook Issues

by Jane MacIntyre

(Page 18)

The economy will play an important role in the elections this November, U.S. Senate candidate Robert Dalton said Monday. Dalton, speaking at the Rotary International Luncheon, said that although the economy is strong nationally, economic prosperity has not been as great statewide.

Dalton stressed the importance of tougher trade measures for improving the state's economic situation and said that stricter trade agreements would enhance the security of jobs here at home. He said that he believed the trade issue would play a critical role in the November elections.

Early polls showed Dalton far behind Sen. Parker but more recent polls indicate that Dalton may be gaining strength. A poll taken earlier this week by the *Observer* showed Dalton trailing the Senator by 20 percentage points. A poll taken in February showed Dalton trailing the Senator by more than 30 percentage points. The latest *Observer* poll also showed some gains for Dalton in terms of name recognition among statewide voters.

In terms of campaign finances, Dalton has failed to close the gap. Dalton is being outspent by a margin of 3 to 1. He has also failed to secure any significant support from Political Action Committees.

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Campaign '88: Talking Issues

By Rich Benedetto

Boston -- Look for the 1988 presidential campaign to focus more on issues than personalities.

Although the primary season isn't over yet, Republican George Bush and Democrat Michael Dukakis are poised to battle over the economy, taxes, education, health care, the Middle East, Central America and government ethics.

In the past two days the vice president has hit the Massachusetts governor for lacking foreign policy experience.

"That could be a major theme of the Bush campaign," says GOP consultant John Dearow.

Dukakis meanwhile is touting his 10 years' experience as a government manager, and pinning on Bush what he sees as the failures of the Reagan administration: the Iran-contra scandal, a weak environmental record, failed Central America policies and the largest budget deficits in history.

"Strengths for Dukakis are weaknesses for Bush," says John Livengood, Democratic chairman in Indiana.

If polls hold up, the contest will be a cliffhanger. "We're going to be up until 4 in the morning on this one," says Democratic consultant Brian Lunde.

GOP consultants Roger Stone says Bush should pick a running mate who "will help by exposing the myth of the Massachusetts Miracle," Dukakis' term for the turnaround in his state's economy.

Dukakis says he'll campaign on issues "that unite people," but he'll also hit hard on the ethics problems of Attorney General Edwin Meese.

"If Mike Dukakis is elected president, you'll have an attorney general you can be proud of," says Dukakis.

Pols Predict Many Close Contests This Fall

By JOHN MACINTYRE

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President Pleads for More Money For Missile Shield

By STEVEN V. ROBERTS

Washington -- President Reagan pleaded with critics on Capitol Hill today to support an increase in funds for his proposed missile shield in space.

At a conference marking the 50th anniversary of his speech proposing the Strategic Defense Initiative, Mr. Reagan asserted, "I believe that given the gravity of the nuclear threat to humanity, any unnecessary delay in the development and deployment of S.D.I. is unconscionable."

Accordingly, the President said he favored deploying the initial phase of the program as soon as it is technologically feasible. But since the first space-based anti-missile weapons will not be ready for deployment until the mid 1990's, any decision on actually putting the system into place will be left to the next President.

The Political Issues

The fervent tone of Mr. Reagan's remarks reflected a desire to persuade Congress to accept the need for such a system before he leaves office at the end of the year.

Martin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, said at his regular briefing today that the anti-missile plan was "the top priority for President Reagan and for the Administration." He added, "We are concerned about some congressional reluctance to fund this program up to levels that we believe are crucial."

Congress has consistently approved expenditures for the anti-missile research below the levels requested by Mr. Reagan. Critics have said that was done deliberately so that the final decisions on the system would be postponed until after Mr. Reagan leaves office.

If a Democrat is elected in November, he could well alter the program or cancel it all together.

Many Billions of Dollars

Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and a leading Democratic spokesman on military issues, recently proposed that the space shield be scaled down and renamed the "Sensible Defense Initiative." Mr. Nunn, whose views are likely to carry weight with any Democratic President, said the system should be designed only to guard against accidental launchings of ballistic missiles, not a concerted offensive strike.

In his speech today, Mr. Reagan said his goal remained a "fully comprehensive defense system," not the partial one described by Mr. Nunn.

The Administration originally estimated that the cost of deploying a comprehensive system would be between \$40 billion and \$60 billion. Administrative officials now accept \$100 billion as a more likely figure, and Mr. Nunn pointed out that some "highly reputable research organizations" put the cost at three or four times that amount.

Mr. Reagan has requested \$5 billion for the program in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, down from a projection of \$6.7 billion last year. If past practice is any guide, that total will be slashed on Capitol Hill, but Mr. Nunn said Congress was willing to support a research effort in the "several billion dollar range."

In his speech today, Mr. Reagan gave a preview of political arguments that the Republican Presidential nominee is likely to make against his Democratic opponent this fall.

APPENDIX C

1. What is the likelihood that (John Parker) will win the election for U.S. Senate? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Likely 1	Somewhat Likely 2	Not Very Likely 3	Not At All Likely 4	Don't Know 8
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2. Suppose the election were held today. What is the likelihood that you would vote for (John Parker) for U.S. Senate? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Likely 1	Somewhat Likely 2	Not Very Likely 3	Not At All Likely 4	Don't Know 8
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3. You may have developed some mental image or picture of (Senator John Parker) as you read the article about him. There may be no particular reason for this image that you can think of, it may have just occurred to you as you read the article.

What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in dealing with military issues? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very Incompetent 7	Don't Know 8
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4. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in maintaining honesty and integrity in government? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very Incompetent 7	Don't Know 8
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5. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence for making decisions on farm issues? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very Incompetent 7	Don't Know 8
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6. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in improving the educational system? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent 1	2	3	4	5	6	Very Incompetent 7	Don't Know 8
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7. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in dealing with health problems? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent							Very Incompetent	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

8. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in improving the economy? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent							Very Incompetent	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

9. What is your best guess about (John Parker's) competence in dealing with the issue of women's rights? Please circle the appropriate response.

Very Competent							Very Incompetent	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

10. Think about (John Parker). The first phrase is "compassionate". In your opinion does the phrase "compassionate" describe (John Parker) extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all? Please circle the appropriate response.

Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Too Well	Not Well At All	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	8

11. In your opinion does the phrase "provide strong leadership" describe (John Parker) extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all? Please circle the appropriate response.

Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Too Well	Not Well At All	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	8

12. In your opinion does the phrase "honest" describe (John Parker) extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all? Please circle the appropriate response.

Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Too Well	Not Well At All	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	8

13. In your opinion does the phrase "knowledgeable" describe (John Parker) extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all? Please circle the appropriate response.

Extremely Well	Quite Well	Not Too Well	Not Well At All	Don't Know
1	2	3	4	8